

In the claims:

1. (Thrice Amended) A method of developing a brand profile for a new product comprising the steps of:

providing a predetermined plurality of product attributes each representing an identifiable feature of a generic product under consideration;

grouping said product attributes in response to customer-oriented market research;

placing each of said attributes in an attribute class corresponding to brand personality importance;

thereafter, generating a preferred product brand position as a function of said product attributes, including identifying a competitive set of products, and associating each of said product attributes with a preferred competitive level with respect to said competitive set; and

generating target product characteristics as a function of said classified product attributes and said preferred product brand position, said target product characteristics representing customer-driven objectives for each of said plurality of product attributes to be incorporated into said new product.

2. (Previously Amended) A method as recited in claim 1 wherein the step of providing a predetermined plurality of product attributes comprises the steps of providing a plurality of summary attributes and a clarifying definition for each of said summary attributes, said clarifying definition providing a relationship between each of said product attributes and the type of product under development.

3. (Previously Amended) A method as recited in claim 1 wherein the step of providing a predetermined plurality of product attributes includes the step of providing a detailed definition for each of said product attributes, each of said

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detailed definitions providing a context for each attribute as it relates to the product under development.

4. (Previously Amended) A method as recited in claim 1 wherein the step of placing each of said attributes in an attribute class includes the step of placing each attribute in one of three classes wherein said first class represents attributes which differentiate the product from competing products, said second class represents important attributes, but which do not differentiate the new product from competing products, and said third class represents otherwise desirable product attributes.

5. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1 wherein the step of placing each of said attributes in an attribute class includes the step of placing each attribute in one of three classes wherein said first class represents attributes which differentiate the product from competing products, said second class represents important attributes, but which do not differentiate the new product from competing products, and said third class represents otherwise desirable product attributes.

6. (Original) A method as recited in claim 4 further comprising the step of ranking each of said product attributes, said rank being related to each of said classes such that each of said attributes in said first class have a higher rank than each of said attributes in said second class and each of said attributes in said second class have a higher rank than each of said attributes in said third class.

7. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1 further comprising the step of generating a primary brand position as a function of said product attributes.

8. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1 further comprising the step of generating a present product brand position as a function of said product attributes.

9. Cancelled.

10. (Previously Amended) A method as recited in claim 1 wherein the step of associating each of said product attributes with a preferred competitive level with respect to said competitive set includes the step of prioritizing each product attribute in one of four levels, said first level representing a desire for the product attribute to be a leader (L) with respect to the competitive set, said second level representing a desire for the product attribute to be among the leaders (A) with respect to the competitive set, said third level representing a desire for the product attribute to be competitive (C) with respect to the competitive set, and said fourth level representing a desire for the product attribute to be minimally competitive (M) with respect to the competitive set.

11. Cancelled.

12. Cancelled.

13. (Thrice Amended) A method of developing a brand profile for a new automotive vehicle comprising the steps of:

providing a plurality of vehicle attributes, said plurality including at least attributes from each of the following groups of vehicle characteristics: usage experience, driving experience, and design;

grouping said product attributes in response to customer-oriented market research;

placing each of said attributes in an attribute class corresponding to brand personality importance;

thereafter, generating a preferred vehicle brand position as a function of said vehicle attributes including identifying a competitive set of products, and associating each of said vehicle attributes with a preferred competitive level with respect to said competitive set; and

generating target vehicle characteristics as a function of said vehicle attributes and said preferred vehicle brand position, said target vehicle characteristics representing customer-driven objectives for each of said plurality of vehicle attributes to be incorporated into said new automotive vehicle.

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14. (Previously Amended) A method as recited in claim 13 wherein the step of providing a plurality of vehicle attributes comprises the steps of providing a plurality of summary attributes and a clarifying definition for each of said summary attributes said clarifying definition providing further detail relating each of said vehicle attributes to a vehicle characteristic.

15. (Previously Amended) A method as recited in claim 13 wherein the step of providing a plurality of vehicle attributes includes the step of providing a detailed definition for each of said vehicle attributes each of said detailed definitions providing a context for each attribute as it relates to the vehicle under development.

16. Cancelled.

17. (Previously Amended) A method as recited in claim 13 wherein the step of placing each of said vehicle attributes in an attribute class includes the step of placing each attribute in one of three classes wherein said first class represents attributes which will differentiate the vehicle from competing vehicles, said second class represents important attributes, but which do not differentiate the vehicle from

competing vehicles, and said third class represents otherwise desirable vehicle attributes.

18. (Original) A method as recited in claim 13 further comprising the step of ranking each of said vehicle attributes.

19. (Original) A method as recited in claim 17 further comprising the step of ranking each of said vehicle attributes, said rank being related to each of said classes such that each of said attributes in said first class have a higher rank than each of said attributes in said second class and each of said attributes in said second class have a higher rank than each of said attributes in said third class.

20. (Original) A method as recited in claim 13 further comprising the step of generating a primary brand position as a function of said vehicle attributes.

21. (Original) A method as recited in claim 13 further comprising the step of generating a present product brand position as a function of said vehicle attributes.

22. Cancelled.

23. (Previously Amended) A method as recited in claim 13 wherein the step of associating each of said vehicle attributes with a preferred competitive level with respect to said competitive set includes the step of prioritizing each vehicle attribute in one of four levels, said first level representing a desire for the vehicle attribute to be a leader (L) with respect to the competitive set, said second level representing a desire for the vehicle attribute to be among the leaders (A) with respect to the competitive set, said third level representing a desire for the vehicle attribute to be competitive (C) with respect to the competitive set, and said fourth

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level representing a desire for the vehicle attribute to be minimally competitive (M) with respect to the competitive set.

24. Cancelled.

25. Cancelled.

26. (Previously Amended) A method as recited in claim 19 wherein the step of ranking each of said attributes includes the step of ranking design attributes differently than usage experience attributes and driving experience attributes.

27. (Original) A method as recited in claim 26 wherein the step of classifying each of said attributes includes the step of classifying each design attribute on a scale having more gradients than the classification scale for classifying usage experience attributes or driving experience attributes.

28. (Thrice Amended) A method of developing a brand profile for a new automotive vehicle comprising the steps of:

providing a plurality of vehicle attributes, said plurality including at least attributes from each of the following groups of vehicle characteristics: usage experience, driving experience, and design;

grouping said product attributes in response to customer-oriented market research;

placing each of said attributes in an attribute class corresponding to brand personality importance;

providing a cross-functional product team;

providing target customer characteristics;

providing target vehicle brand image characteristics;

thereafter, generating a preferred vehicle brand position by said cross-functional product team as a function of said vehicle attributes, said target customer characteristics, and said target vehicle image characteristics; and

generating target vehicle objectives by said cross-functional product team as a function of said vehicle attributes and said preferred vehicle brand position, said target vehicle objectives representing customer-driven and image-driven characteristics for each of said plurality of vehicle attributes to be incorporated into said new automotive vehicle.

29. (Original) A method as recited in claim 28 wherein the step of providing target customer characteristics comprises the step of providing a brand positioning summary.

30. (Original) A method as recited in claim 29 wherein said brand positioning summary includes target customer defining characteristics, target customer selection rationales, a summary of the new vehicles' role in the product portfolio, a competitive assessment, enduring reasons why a customer may purchase the new vehicle, and pricing considerations.

31. (Original) A method as recited in claim 28 wherein the step of providing target vehicle image characteristics comprises the step of providing a brand bullseye.

32. Cancelled.

33. (Previously Amended) A method as recited in claim 28 wherein said cross-functional product team includes at least one member from each of the following corporate departments: vehicle program management, marketing, purchasing, financ , engineering, and design.